Agency Analysis Of The Cia Essay, Research Paper

Erik NicholsonPolitical Science 201Agency AnalysisA) I chose to do my agency analysis on the CIA. There are various reasons that I chose this particular agency. Perhaps, the most important reason for my choice is due to the fact that it seems that this is one of the most vague agencies that taxpayers fund. For as little as the general public knows about the CIA, it is a very common subject to come up in conversation. Questions and concerns about the CIA emerge in conversation much more often that it should, especially since it is a key topic when discussions of conspiracies, national security and drug cartels. All sensitive and controversial matters, the CIA and drug lords are often spoke of synonymously, the Kennedy assassination has been linked with to the CIA and everyone has heard of the infamous black helicopters . However, no one seems to know anything about the CIA. The cliches of conspiracy and corruptness run on endlessly, yet these theories remain unsubstantiated and, virtually, without proof. Are these unverifiable because they are the concoctions of over-active, paranoid minds or because the roots of conspiracy lie so deep in American heritage that the network of lies is too deep to ever untangle? With an agency that seems to be accountable to no one, how can the American public know or trust what this agency represents?B) The Central Intelligence Agency was officially created in 1947 with the signing of the National Security Act by President Truman, however covert organizations existed in U.S. Government long before the signing of the Security Act. Roosevelt, over the objections of military leaders, had already assigned retired Army Lt. Col. William “Wild Bill Donovan, a World War I Medal of Honor winner, to create the Office of the Coordinator of Information . This later became the Office of Strategic Services . During World War II, Donovan s agents staged daring, James Bond-style missions behind enemy lines and played a subtle but crucial role in numerous allied victories. OSS veterans such as Allen Foster Dulles would later form the core of the agency s successor, the CIA.1 The National Security Act charged the Director of Central Intelligence with correlating, evaluating, breaking down, and coordinating the nation’s intelligence activities, which directly affects national security. The DCI serves as head of the United States Intelligence Community and the CIA, but is also principal advisor to the President for Intelligence matters related to national security. The CIA is an independent agency, responsible to the President through the DCI, and accountable to the American people through the intelligence oversight committees of the U.S. Congress.2C) According to the CIA web site their mission is to support the President, the National Security Council, and all officials who make and execute U.S. national security policy. The CIA does this mainly by conducting counterintelligence activities and other services related to foreign intelligence and national security. They also engage in research, development, and deployment of very elite technology for intelligence purposes. As a separate agency, CIA serves as an independent source of analysis on topics of concern and works closely with the other organizations in the intelligence community in order to quickly provide accurate intelligence information in any emergency situation.3 The CIA s policies lie somewhere in between structural and strategic. These policies remain very low in public view and do not have a direct congressional committee that oversees them. There is a sub-committee that oversees all intelligence in the United States, but they deal with thirteen different intelligence agencies. Of these thirteen different agencies, the CIA is the only one that remains completely an independent agency.4 The CIA officially claims that no interest groups or outside services influence it, however, public speculation is just the opposite. For instance, the producers of the CIA s so called elite technology must have a large indirect influence upon matters within the CIA, at least when dealing with money.D) The most vague part of the CIA has been the amount of American budget it consumes each year. It has been known for a quite a while that the CIA’s money comes from defense spending, but how much each year was unknown until the partial declassification of the aggregate intelligence budget in 1997. Due to a lawsuit filed under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), George J. Telnet the DCI, released a paragraph statement about the budget of the intelligence community as a whole rather than the CIA in general. No specifics were given about how the money is distributed among the thirteen intelligence agencies or about how it is distributed within any of these specific agencies. According to CIA Press Release No. 13-15 October 15th 1997, the aggregate budget for all intelligence that fiscal year was $26.6 billion. A similar, yet even shorter, press release in 1998 said that the intelligence budget for that fiscal year was 26.7 billion. Yet, there were no specifics given as to where the 26.7 billion actually went.

Some non-profit organizations, through years of research and investigation claim to have the full budget and distribution information. The Federation of American Scientists claim that within 5% accuracy they have figured out the budget of the CIA. The claims by the FAS may very well be accurate, but all we know for sure is that of the estimated $263 billion that was our entire defense budget, the intelligence community claims to only use about 10% of that.5 However, no hard data is actually provided to the American public.E) When researching the CIA, one finds that just as the budget is impossible to interpret, the personel records are classified as well. The American public knows nothing about how many individuals or exactly who works for the CIA. There are not even many educated speculations as to how many are employed or what the exact job titles and responsibilities are. The CIA claims that such secrecy and confidentiality is to protect our national security.6F) The public view of the CIA is an interesting one with very many different viewpoints. Many patriotic people see the CIA as a “secret agent” organization that runs around protecting everyone from the evil and horrible bad guys. Many others see it has the perfect cover for mass organized crime. Right now, the most commonplace conception of intelligence, in general, is that they are inept. This goes hand in hand with the terrorist attack on the USS Cole. Thousands are blaming the attack on the intelligence experts and newspaper reports are not helping this negative conception. One article stated A top Pentagon terrorist intelligence expert who had warned of possible threats against U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf quit his job the day after the deadly attack on the USS Cole, a Senate Armed Services Committee lawmaker said Wednesday. 7 A news brief from the White House days before the attack on the USS Cole, specifically addressed the concern of a terrorist attack on US forces stationed in the middle eastern areas, and the speaker for the State Department said, the Department of State is extremely concerned about the possibility for violent actions against United States citizens and interests throughout the world, today we have issued another Public Announcement highlighting the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula and Turkey, noting that we have received indications of the possible planning for terrorist actions in the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula and Turkey. 8 Many people see statements like this of clear warning for what was to happen to the USS Cole, yet U.S. intelligence forces were not able to hinder or stop attacks. Such lack of proactive response has led the public to view intelligence with distrust.G) The primary purpose of this report, for me, was to learn about an agency that I knew little of. The main reason that I chose the CIA was in an attempt to try to see if all the negative rumors were true or valid. I have not been able to make a clear conclusion other than to believe that there is enough of a question in my mind to support the possibility that many of these rumors or theories may be true and seem somewhat reasonable. It seems that this agency makes a point of staying out of the public light as much as possible. They had their obligatory web site with very minimal and vague information. Beyond that widespread information, it was hard to obtain any concrete information or hard facts about anything other than surface or historical information. The existence of powerful sub-governments is obviously and frequently used, without such sub-governments agencies could not maintain such classified stature. In a government for the people by the people it seems odd to me that something could be kept so secret. Personnel information and demographics and use of spending can be provided to some extent without giving up government secrets. It can almost be said that the CIA is strategically, structural in its dealings with the government it is meant to serve.H)